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United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

Intermountain Region

Ogden, Utah

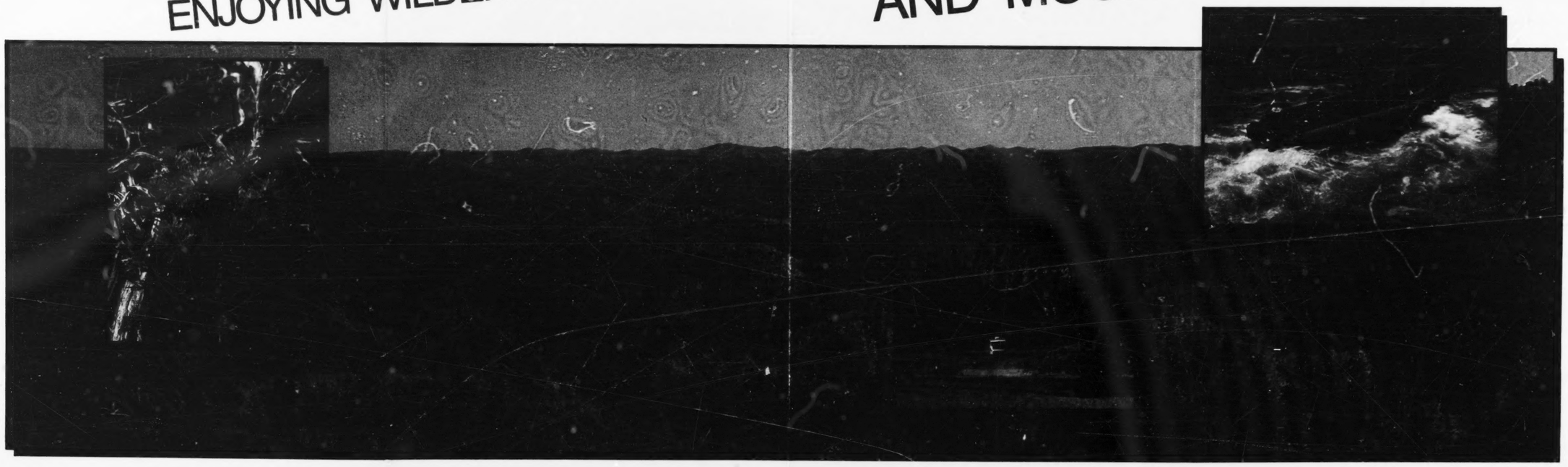
Multiple Use

A 13.2:

A NATIONAL FOREST?
WHAT HAPPENS THERE?

A Lot– CAMPING–HUNTING–HIKING–LOGGING–GRAZING–FISHING–SKIING–MINING–EXPLORING–CONSERVING–PROTECTING AND RESTORING WATERSHEDS AND WILDLIFE HABITAT–FIGHTING WILDFIRE–SPECIAL USES–ENJOYING WILDERNESS–WATER PRODUCTION–BOATING–FISHING–HUNTING–

AND MUCH MUCH MORE.



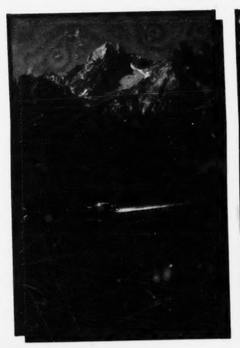
THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND

This land is yours and needs your protection, care, and concern. Long ago Indians knew if they cared for the earth, the earth would care for them. Gifford Pinchot, America's first forester said, "Caring for the land and serving the people is the goal of the U.S. Forest Service." As part owner, you are challenged to protect and use wisely all facets of your National Forests.

A National Forest is more than trees and camping, hiking, fishing, and hunting. A National Forest is a land of many uses.

INTERMOUNTAIN REGION

For orientation, the Intermountain Region encompasses National Forests in Utah, Nevada, southern Idaho, western Wyoming, and parts of Colorado and California. This Region boasts rugged mountains, fertile valleys, rivers, deserts, wildlife, campgrounds, Wildernesses, adventure, solitude, and scenery enough to saturate your aesthetic cravings.



WATERSHEDS

Before the earth was covered with people, nature dominated the land. Around the turn of the century, no one cared about the ecology. Land was used and abused. Communities downstream from denuded lands suffered flash floods and fields were filled with sediment. Citizens asked for federal management to prevent land loss and the National Forests were created partially to meet these needs.

Watersheds to help protect the earth from erosion were set aside and continue today. Sometimes you can see "scars" of the past marking the mountainsides, but other restored areas look natural and undisturbed. Where erosion was minimal, the Forest Service restored the land by planting trees, grasses, or shrubs. On steep slopes or gullies, the Forest Service built check dams in streams or contour-trenched hillsides to slow runoff. Restoration began, vegetation began to grow and, today, watershed management is an integral part of your Forests.

WILDERNESS

Wild and uncultivated, inhabitated only by big game, soaring birds, skittering creatures, fish and native flowers, trees and grass, the Wilderness invites your visits but never a permanent one. In the 1920's, several farsighted foresters realized some parts of planet earth must be left untouched for nature to take its course. Environmentalists believe that the protection we spread over our wilderness counts as part of the rent we pay for our room on earth. In the 1960's, land designated by Congress as Wilderness was set aside to remain forever untamed. This assures us that some pieces of earth will always stay in their original form. Visitors to the Wilderness, though always welcome, owe the earth the courtesy of leaving nothing behind but their footsteps and taking nothing with them but photographs. One piece of litter is one piece too many and any evidence of a visit is a desecration. Protected by the National Wilderness Preservation System, 32 million acres of primeval Wildernesses full of unchecked luxuriance and virgin growth are yours so you may escape from the pressures of modern civilization and enjoy pristine privileges.

MINERALS AND ENERGY

"There's gold in those hills!" called early prospectors. They picked up their pans and headed out to find riches. Gold and many other minerals still hide in the National Forests and you are welcome to prospect, pan, and mine there. Recreationally speaking, you may prospect and pan without permits. Searching for precious minerals in National Forests whets the imagination and challenges ingenuity.

Long before the establishment of the first National Forest, Congress declared mineral exploration and development "the highest and best use" of public lands. Consequently, mineral exploration and development are allowed on most National Forest lands as long as such use complies with guidelines to protect the environment. Many communities rely on commercial mining and processing of minerals for employment and support. Common minerals, such as sand, gravel and rocks, are necessary for construction. Those associated with minerals also work as partners with the Forest Service in striving to conserve these valuable natural resources.

Besides mineral operations, energy sources are part of the National Forest scene. Oil and gas wells and associated powerlines and pipelines, radio towers, dams, and power plants share space on your National Forests. Under a master plan concerned with aesthetics, conservation, wildlife protection, ecological balance, and safety, energy sources become a part of the multiple-use pattern.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

In early settlement days, cattle and sheep roamed freely over the ranges and grazed where they wished, but their activities were devastating to the land. Livestock denuded natural watersheds, causing floods and depriving townspeople of summer grazing land for their domestic stock. Citizens requested creation of National Forests to protect their grazing rights.

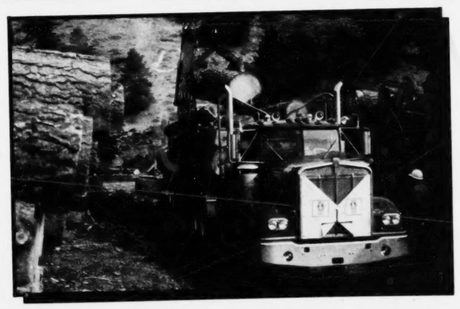
Since the settlers were already using the lands, grazing by domestic livestock was accepted as a valid use of public lands when the National Forests were created. Improper grazing caused long term damage, so the Forest Service studied the grazing capacity of the land and set up protective guidelines, often reducing livestock numbers. Vegetation was re-established to provide more forage and rangeland for wildlife and domestic animals.

Here in the West, agriculture and livestock provide not only food and fabrics for the nation, but a livelihood for many families. Permits are issued for livestock to graze the National Forests but locations and numbers are monitored to assume rangeland projection and a balance of uses. Today, as you journey through the National Forests, you may still encounter cowboys rounding up cattle. Your children may be excited as you drive slowly through a band of sheep moving from lowland pastures to high mountain summer ranges where wildlife and domestic animals share adequate forage. Livestock grazing, one of the multiple uses of the National Forests, continues in a traditional manner, blending harmoniously with the many other Forest uses.

WILDLIFE AND FISH HABITAT

A Canada goose, honking high in the autumn sky, seeks refuge on a riverbank. Spotted fawns nestle down in shadowed glades, camouflaged from the world. Giant salmon lurch and lunge upstream, fighting to return to their homewaters to spawn and die. Bears hibernate in dark caves while night birds swoop down upon rodents scurrying across the snow on a moonlit night. Eternal, rhythmic, and naturally balanced, wildlife cycles repeat themselves, over and over again, until an outside force interrupts their flow. As civilization spreads, it alters the landscape, and decreases habitats for wild animals, birds and fish. Where once fresh streams flowed freely and animals lived according to natural balance, man has encroached, leaving some plants and animals in danger of extinction. To turn this tide, the Forest Service maintains and improves major areas of wildlife habitat for all plants and animals native to National Forest lands.

With each extinction, we lose another piece of our planet. As you visit your National Forests, note the marks of guardianship. Sometimes motorized travel is restricted to protect woodland babies. Perhaps a Forest Service sign asks you to stay off a trail or part of a mountain, or not fish in a particular stream. Compliance will protect and perpetuate the environment for our fish, flora and fauna.



TIMBER

When you think of forests, you immediately think of trees. A panoramic view of stately spruce, quaking aspens, and ramrod-straight lodgepole pines pop into your mind. Without a good plan, however, this aesthetic picture disappears. In the late 1800's, settlers assumed forests were eternal. The frontier provided virgin timber, first in New England and then the Lake states. When timber cutting started in the Northwest, conservationists realized the "cut and run" methods would destroy the forests and that trees need replacing to provide wood for the future.

Conservation, now part of the laws governing every National Forest, includes "sustained yield," which is cutting only as much wood as can be replaced. Cutover areas must be restocked within five years, either naturally or by planting. Before cutting takes place, the terrain and tree species must be considered to minimize erosion and perpetuate the stand. When a catastrophe occurs, such as forest fire, volcanic eruption, or an insect epidemic, the Forest Service attempts to salvage as much damaged material as possible so new growth can begin as soon as possible.

National Forest timber is managed to accomplish many objectives: commercial logging, personal wood cutting, removing decaying trees for safety purposes and providing a wide range of wildlife habitats. In snow catchment areas, timber harvests are laid out to retain, and slowly release, winter snows so you will have water during summer droughts.

If we use our National Forests wisely, stands of healthy trees will grow forever, sheltering woodland creatures and supplying timber, wood cuttings, picnic spots, and beauty.

RECREATION

Leave your stress behind and spend time with nature. Toss a tent, sleeping bag, cooking gear, and food in the car, and in a couple of hours from any place in the Intermountain Region, you can pull into a Forest Service campground, pitch your tent, and spend a great get-away weekend in the hills. Fishing for the big ones or dabbling a hook in the stream, swimming, canoeing, and cooking over a campfire erase the worries of the work world. Rock hounding, exploring Indian ruins, reading petroglyphs, or soaking in a natural hot spring will give you a new lease on life.

You want to go farther from civilization? Backpacking space abounds. Please consult Forest Service maps and handouts for information on where to go and how to get there, and heed the directions. Since 1905, the Forest Service has been striving to make your lands better, safer, and more accessible for your use.

Feeling adventuresome? White water river running, big game hunting, winter campouts and sports, mountain climbing, and horseback riding are challenges to be explored in your multiple-use Forests.

For those who prefer a less robust trip, how about scenic drives, photography excursions, birdwatching, pine cone gathering, and a picnic. All these experiences, and more, wait for you.

Load up your all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), check your maps and handouts for directions. Spend a few days with family and friends exploring the back country. Tread lightly, protect the earth, and have fun.

Woodcutting, a popular family outing in the Intermountain Region, starts early in the summer and continues through the fall. Contact your local Ranger District for information and a woodcutting permit.

These suggestions only scratch the surface. When you play in a National Forest, let your imagination lead you into exciting (safe) adventure in the out-of-doors.

"Forest" comes from Latin, meaning "out of doors," and there is more to the Forest than outdoor recreation. Your Forests are lands of many integrated uses working together.

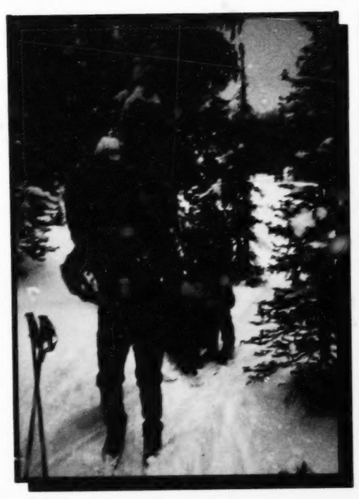
ROADS

Roads take you to and bring you back from farflung corners of your National Forests. Every road, designed with a purpose in mind, serves many uses. Some roads invite you to enter the Forest. Other roads, closed after timber hauling, mineral extraction, or other uses, ask you not to intrude. Oftentimes these roads are closed to provide privacy and protection for animals. In springtime, wild mothers prefer to give birth to their young away from the prying eyes of humans. Sometimes, the flowers and grasses need to grow untrampled by visitors. Closed roads invite you to explore on foot. As stewards of the National Forests, heed the "closed-road" signs but follow and enjoy the open roads as they beckon you to outdoor adventures.

LAND OF MANY USES

Each generation, in turn, becomes the custodian rather than the absolute owner of National Forest resources and each generation has the obligation to pass this inheritance, intact, on to the future. You and the Forest Service are partners in seeing that the National Forests fulfill and magnify the intent of their creation. Your partnership decrees the right to enjoy but not destroy any facet of the National Forest System. Managing the multiple uses of the National Forests, protecting trees, earth, and wildlife, as well as providing nature's best for all, takes many dedicated people.

Forest Supervisors, District Rangers, their staffs, and volunteers live and work in the National Forests. They answer your questions, serve your needs when you visit the National Forests, and dedicate themselves to protecting these lands, your lands, so you can enjoy the magnificence of the mountains; the serenity of Wilderness; the thrill of skiing and kayaking; the miracles of spring flowers, baby animals, and majestic big game; the sound of birds; a camping trip; and the fun of a summer picnic in your National Forests—the Land of Many Uses.



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